

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2312

S E C R E T BEIRUT 6039

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS SECDEF AND CINCEUR

E. O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: MASS, LE

SUBJ: GOL REQUEST FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE

REF: BEIRUT 5968

1. GOL JUSTIFICATION FOR MAJOR EQUIPMENT REQUESTED

REFTEL FOLLOWS:

A. TANKS, M60 A1: 36 EA: THESE ARE FOR FULLY
EQUIPPING ONE ARMORED BN. THE CHARIOTEERS PRESENTLY ON
HAND PROVED TO BE TOTALLY UNSUITABLE IN THE RECENT OPERA-
TIONS. AMMO IS UNAVAILABLE, AND MAINTENANCE IS
VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF SPARES. AS
AN EXAMPLE OF UNRELIABILITY IN A MOVE OF 12 CHARIOTEERS
FROM TYRE TO BEIRUT DURING RECENT CRISIS, 7 BROKE
DOWN ENROUTE. STUDIES FOR PURCHASE OF M60 AS OPPOSED
TO M-48 WERE ALREADY UNDER WAY WHEN THE CURRENT DISTURBANCES
BROKE OUT, PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF FIRE POWER OF 105 MM GUN.

B. 155 SP M-109: 18 EA: IN FUTURE OPERATIONS,
EITHER AGAINST THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION OR DEFENSE OF
THE EASTERN BORDER, MOBILITY AND SPEED OF EMPLACEMENT
WILL BE THE CENTRAL ELEMENTS OF THE ARMY'S TACTICAL
EMPLOYMENT OF ARTILLERY. TOWED ARTILLERY POSITION AREAS
PROVED BULNERABLE TO FEDAYEEN BECAUSE OF THE REQUIREMENT TO
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EMPLACE IN AREAS WHERE LEAST DAMAGE WOULD RESULT TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS. 18 HOWITZERS WOULD REPLACE WORN OUT TOWED EQUIPMENT IN ONE ARTILLERY BATTALION WHICH PRESENTLY UNUSABLE.

C. M-113 A1: 60 EA W/ GUN SHIELD KIT: THIS PROVED TO BE THE BEST VEHICLE EMPLOYED DURING RECENT CRISIS ACCORDING TO REPORTS RECEIVED IN DAO. WITH RUN SHIELDS MOUNTED IT COULD ALSO BE USED IN OFFENSIVE ROLE AND SUPPLEMENT THE EXISTING ARMORED CARS. 2 WERE DESTROYED AND 2 DAMAGED IN FIGHTING. MORE ARE NEEDED TO BE DEPLOYED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

D. AIRCRAFT, SKYHAWK, A4 B, 16 EA: THE UNSUITABILITY OF THE MACH II MIRAGES WAS CLEARLY EVIDENT FROM THE FACT THAT THEY WERE HARDLY USED IN OPERATIONS AGAINST THE FEDAYEEN IN AND AROUND BEIRUT. IN ADDITION, THEY ARE EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE TO OPERATE AND HAVE HAD UNACCEPTABLE DOWN-TIME DUE TO THE UNRESPONSIVENESS OF THE FRENCH SUPPLY SYSTEM. THE A4'S WILL BECOME THE BACKBONE OF THE SMALL LEBANESE AIR FORCE, AUGMENTED BY THE USEFUL BUT LOWER PAYLOAD HAWKER- HUNTERS. THESE LATTER ARE ALL DUE FOR MAJOR STRUCTURAL OVERHAUL IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

E. HELICOPTERS, UH1 N: 4 EA. THESE WILL BE USED PRIMARILY FOR MOBILITY WHERE AREAS CAN BE TOTALLY CUT OFF BY A SINGLE ROAD BLOCK BECAUSE OF THE EASILY CHOKED ROAD NETWORK. THE ONE AUGUSTA- BELL AND 6 ALLOUETTE HELICOPTERS IN THE CURRENT INVENTORY HAVE INSUFFICIENT LIFT CAPABILITY FOR ANTICIPATED NEEDS. CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO GREATER USE OF HELICOPTERS AS OBSERVATION AND FIRING PLATFORMS BECAUSE OF THE INDISCRIMINATE USE OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS BY THE FEDAYEEN AND THE DESIRE OF THE ARMY TO BRING ACCURATE FIRE ON THEIR TARGETS. HELICOPTERS WERE USED EFFECTIVELY IN THIS ROLE DURING THE RECENT CLASHES.

F. NAVAL PATROL CRAFT: 6 EA: THESE WILL MORE THAN DOUBLE THE SIZE OF THE LEBANESE NAVY. WITH A 125 MILE COASTLINE, THE COUNTRY IS HIGHLY VULNERABLE TO ATTACK AND SMUGGLING OF ARMAMENTS FROM THE SEA. OF MAJOR
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CONCERN ARE THE SEASIDE INSTALLATIONS OF TAPLINE, MEDRECO, IPC AND THE U. S. EMBASSY. THE NEED FOR THESE HAS LONG BEEN RECOGNIZED BUT RE- EQUIPPING THE ARMY FOR CONVENTIONAL OPERATIONS AGAINST THE FEDAYEEN HAS HELD A HIGHER PRIORITY IN RECENT ARMS PURCHASES.
HOUGHTON

NOTE BY OC/ T: BEIRUT 6039 NOT PASSED DODE, OR CINCEUR.

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